

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

Statement on the Fifth Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention
May 12, 2023

Chemical weapons have wrought unthinkable horrors upon our world, and should never again be developed or deployed—period. That's the commitment the world made when the Chemical Weapons Convention created the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in 1997, and it's a commitment we must renew every day until our world is free from the threat of chemical weapons.

Next week, the United States and our fellow States Parties will gather for the Fifth Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention to review our progress and determine what more we must do to rid the world of chemical weapons.

As we work together toward our shared goal, the United States is leading by example. We are on track to complete the destruction of our chemical weapons stockpile by this fall, a disarmament milestone that upholds the highest standards of transparency and public safety. We are steadfast in our support for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons' new Center for Chemistry and Technology, which will help the Organization better carry out its verification, inspection, and attribution responsibilities and build the capacities of others to counter chemical weapons. And, together with our partners, we will continue to strengthen the Organization's ability to address nontraditional chemical threats that have emerged in recent decades to ensure it can face the challenges of today.

The United States will continue to stand with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to prevent the stockpiling, production, and use of chemical weapons around the world. We should all work together to encourage the remaining nations to join the Chemical Weapons Convention. And I urge every nation to stand for the truth and join us in promoting accountability for violations of this treaty, including Syria's use of sarin and chlorine and Russia's use of Novichok nerve agents. The use of chemical weapons is never acceptable, and the world can be assured that the United States will not rest in this fight against impunity.

We must not stop until all children can grow up in a world without the scourge of chemical weapons.

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